

How To Study the Bible with Understanding

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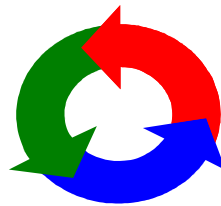
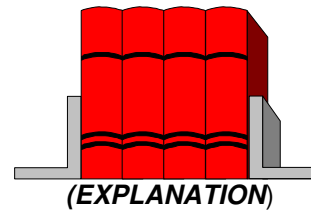
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“HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

WITH UNDERSTANDING”
(Making The Most Of Bible Study)

***“Study To Show Yourself Approved Unto God,
A Workman, That Needs Not To Be Ashamed,
Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth.”***

II. Timothy 2:15 (KJV)



By:

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“HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE ... WITH UNDERSTANDING”
(Studying The Bible For All It's Worth)

INTRODUCTION

Bible Study is, without question, crucial to the life of every believer! There is no debate as to whether or not a baby needs food to survive, whether or not flower's need sun to live, or whether tree's need water to thrive. It is also equally unquestionable that we, as Christians, and followers of Christ **NEED** to **STUDY** the Bible if we are going to receive the most that we can from God!

For many Christians our efforts in attempting to maximize our “*ministries*”, our church's, and our lives in general; have included many different things. But too often, the element of rich, real, and refreshing, Bible Study has been left out.

As a Gospel preacher I have often sat in awe of other preacher's, and their ability to articulate, manipulate, and handle the Word of God. I've often sat and wondered: “*How'd they get all of that out of that verse?*” I've said,; “*I didn't see all of that there? Where'd they find all of that information?*”

Well, today, with the help of God, it is our aim and hope to begin this study on: *Bible Study*. So that, we can enhance, educate, and equip ourselves to be better students of God's Word, and better Christians as a result.

For too long, many Christians have sat around waiting for the next church Bible Study, worship service, or revival to receive what we perceive to be “deeper” knowledge or fulfillment in the Word of God. The design and desire of these lessons are to make us individually able to dig the treasures of God's Word and discover it's rewards on our own. That's not to say that church Bible Study, worship service, revival, etc., are not crucially important to the life of every Christian; because they are! However, I simply want to emphasize the fact that you and I **DON'T HAVE TO WAIT ON ANYBODY, TO STUDY GOD'S WORD MORE EFFECTIVELY!**

Perhaps you are already a proficient and effective student of the Bible, if so, I hope that this lesson will enhance your study. Perhaps you are a new Christian and want to know the basics of Bible Study. If so these lessons are designed to help you too. Regardless of where we are in the Lord, learning to use our Bible's and Bible help's more effectively is a good thing.

God has called each of us, through His Son Jesus Christ to be disciples (*disciple's, or learner's*). That means we are to be - students of Christ. That being the case we must learn to study, because study is one of the things student's do.

Let's study together!

1.

WHY THIS LESSON?

You may be wondering just why would I teach a lesson on Bible Study? Well, here are some of the reasons:

Because Christians Need To Be:

1. _____

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel (Good News); of Christ: for it is the **power** of God to salvation to every one that believes; ... “ Romans 1:16a*

2. _____

*“Thy word is a **lamp** to my feet, and a **light** to my path.” Psalms 119:105*

3. _____

*“Study to **show yourself approved** before God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” II. Timothy 2:15*

*** STUDY VS. READING:**

Real Study involves:

1. In _____

2. Ex _____

3. App _____

Most Reading Includes:

1. Staying At The _____ level.

2. The Absence Of Real _____.

3. The Presence Of Un_____.

2.

**** TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE BIBLE STUDY:**

With the number of good study Bibles available today, none of us are without

excuse for not having at least one, in our possession! Here are some suggestions:

A. A GOOD STUDY BIBLE:

1. The Nelson Open Bible.
2. The Life Application Bible.
3. The Thompson Chain Reference Bible.
4. The Parallel Bible.
5. The Dakes Annotated Reference Bible.
6. The Spiro Zodiates Hebrew/Greek Key Study Bible.
7. The Topical Bible.

B. A BIBLE DICTIONARY:

This book will help you to identify People, Places, and Things in Scripture. Often providing pictures, in addition to definitions and commentary. There are numerous one's available. They include:

1. The New Bible Dictionary, by Eerdman, William B.
2. The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia, by Moody Press.
3. The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Zondervan Press.
4. Cruden's Bible Dictionary, Cruden, Alexander, Spire Books.
5. Vine's Expository Dictionary Of Old and New Testament Words, Revell Press.

C. A CONCORDANCE:

This will help you to identify the meaning, pronunciation, and context of words. You can also use this to locate various verses in the Bible. Here are a couple of suggestions.:

1. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible.
2. Cruden's Concordance Of The Holy Scriptures.

D. A COMMENTARY:

This will help you with interpretation, context, history, and people in your study. Here are a few suggestions.:

1. The Wycliffe Bible Commentary.
2. The Tyndale Old & New Testament Commentaries.
3. The J. Vernon McGee Old & New Testament Commentaries.
4. The Eerdman Bible Commentary.

E. OTHER BOOKS:

There are countless other books that can enhance any Christians library. They include books such as:

- A. Books on a subject. Like, Ivor Powell's book on "*The Gospel Of Mark.*"
- B. Books on Bible words. Like: Kenneth Wuest's "*Word Studies In The Greek New Testament.*"

* And much, much, more!

3.

F. COMPUTER PROGRAMS:

Finally, with the advent of computers into every place of human life. There are countless computer programs and/or software available for the Christian to use. Some include:

- A. BibleSoft, by Microsoft.
- B. QuickVerse, by Parsons Technology.
- C. LOGOS Bible Software, by Logos Research Systems Inc.
- D. Online Bible For Macintosh, by The Numbers, Inc.
- E. BIBLE Master For IBM & MAC, by American Bible Sales.

We are without excuse! God has graciously provided us with all we need by way of materials. Now all we need is the will and desire to learn all we can.



4.

CONTEXT

A. Definition: *“To weave. To come together. The parts just before and after a passage that determine it’s meaning.”*

Latin: Com (con) = together.

Texere. (text) = to weave.

When we speak of context, we speak of *understanding the world, surroundings, and setting in general, in which a given verse is taking place.* **Context is: “That which goes before and that which follows after.”**

Some time ago, I engaged in a conversation with a co-worker about sin. Particularly the sin of homosexuality. The co-worker asked me, “Does God hate homosexuals?” and, “Do you believe all homosexuals are doomed to hell?”

I responded by telling my co-worker that “God loves the sinner, but he hates the sin ... in all cases!” Shortly thereafter the statement being circulated at the workplace, concerning “my stand on sin and sinners”; was that Pastor Fort believes God loves all sinners (and consequently all sin); and the word from the liberals and non Christians was that, Pastor Fort believes that all sinners are hated by God.

You can see just how easy it is for a statement to be taken out of context without the consideration of the Context. Namely that which took place before and after. All of us have heard of people we know, or persons in the public eye, or perhaps even ourselves who have been victims of comments taken out of context. And whenever this happens, it’s always because people have not considered that which came before and after the comments, conversation, events, or what have you.

The same is true when dealing with Scripture. We must in every case consider the Scriptures Context.

When studying Scripture Context must be considered in many (*if not all*); areas. Here’s what I mean.:

Context must be looked at:

1. Historically: In other words what is the historical setting and surrounding of the particular portion of Scripture you are studying? What other relevant, rich, and rewarding events does Scripture and/or history record about this time or event?

Read: Isaiah 6:1

Other Examples:

2. Culturally: What is the cultural climate of the people and place that you are studying in Scripture? In other words, what are the customs, practices, or *specific lifestyles* of the people and place which you are studying?

Read: Genesis 19:1-29

Other Examples:

3. Socially: What is going on in this passage of study societally? In other words, are there specific social interactions between the primary people in the passage?

5.

For example: Is there a meeting between the Jews and the Samaritans in your passage of study? **Read:** John 4:7-37.

Other Examples:

4. Spiritually: What is the spiritual atmosphere of the passage you are studying? In every passage there is a spiritual presence! Are there demons present in the passage? Is there a person practicing witchcraft, or divination in the passage? Is the Holy Spirit performing a miracle in the passage? What is the “air” or attitude of the passage? How is the Holy Spirit moving and performing in the passage you’re studying? What is the primary lesson that God, through The **Holy Spirit**, teaching us through this verse?

Read: Matthew 4:1-11

Other Examples:

* Certainly the pursuit of Context, and it's place in Bible Study can go on, and on. However, the above mentioned areas give you something to begin working with, and share some of the chief areas that Context is so important in!

B. Discovery: Using Acts chapter one, and verse eight (Acts 1:8); let's Discover for ourselves some clues about Context.

In discovering the context of this passage, let's look for the famous Five "**W's**"! Namely:

1. **Who**
2. **What**
3. **When**
4. **Where**
5. **Why**
6. And when necessary let's add the "**How.**"

Here's the verse:

"... but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 1:8 (NAS)

Let's break it down:

6.

C. Do It Yourself:

Below is a copy of a study format you can use while studying the Bible. Use this sheet to help you in discovering some of the truths in this passage.

STUDY SHEET

First & Foremost Begin Your Study With ... PRAYER!!!

- 1. Name Of The Book:**
- 2. Author Of The Book:**
- 3. Subject and/or Theme Of The Book:**
- 4. To Whom Was The Book Written?:**
- 5. Purpose Of The Book:**

A. Why Am I Studying This Particular Scripture?

B. OBSERVATION DETERMINES:

Who Are The **Main People** In This Passage?

What Are The **Major Words** In This Passage?

C. EXPLANATION DISCOVERS:

What Is The **Meaning** Of This Passage?

E. APPLICATION DEMONSTRATES:

How Will Studying This Passage Affect **Me?**

7.

I. OBSERVATION

Observation is, without question, the first and foremost part of rich, rewarding, Bible Study ... apart from prayer. The very first thing that all of us must do when approaching the Word from a studious, student-like perspective, is to ask ourselves: *“What do I see in this verse?”*

And that question, specifically: *“What do I see?”*; is the beginning to beneficial Bible Study! In fact, one author wrote: “What makes one person a better Bible student than another? He can see more, that’s all.” Wow! What a statement. The first question of Bible Study is: What do you see?

The fact is you already knew this was a major question in Bible Study. Although you may not have known this is the First question in Bible study. All of us have heard someone preach or teach from a familiar portion of Scripture, only to ask ourselves how they got all of that out of that verse. Or, how in the world did they mess up a simple verse like that? Well, the key to in depth Bible Study begins with this point of Observation. The question we must ask as we read John three and sixteen, Psalms the twenty-third chapter or Acts one and eight is: *“What do I see?”* Not what did the preacher see who preached it last week. Not even what would “so in so” see now if he or she was reading this passage. But instead, what do I see? Because the same Holy Spirit who’s gifted the preacher/pastor, teacher with insight, is available to help you with seeing the tremendous treasures in His Word!

1. OBSERVATION BEGINS WITH READING:

If you are going to be a student of the Bible you must learn to read! In fact, you must develop a love of reading the Word. When reading the Word of God in Bible Study, you should read with an eye toward observation ... initially! In other words begin with simply observing the passage through simple reading. However you must learn to read with _____.

This Means Reading:

A. An _____

“Study to show yourself approved unto God ... rightly dividing the word of truth.”
II Timothy 2:15

B. Pa _____

“We must read The Word **slowly, and carefully**, because if we don’t; we’ll pass up more, than we catch up with.” Dr. A. L. Patterson

C. Me _____

“How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he **meditates** day and night.”
-Psalms 1:1a, 2 (NAS)

D. Inq _____

“Make me know Thy ways, O Lord; **Teach me** Thy paths. Lead me in Thy truth and teach me, For Thou art the God of my salvation; **For Thee I wait all the day.**”
-Psalms 25:4, 5 (NAS)
8.

E. Re _____

2. SINCE OBSERVATION IS ‘SEEING’; JUST WHAT SHOULD WE LOOK FOR?

Look For:

A. The _____ In The Passage/Scripture!

B. The _____ The Passage/Scripture Is Happening In!

C. The _____ (Pro’s); In The Passage!

D. The _____ (Con’s); In The Passage!

E. The _____ Relationships In The Passage!

F. The Key _____ In The Passage!

G. The _____ Words In The Passage!

H. The _____ Spirit In The Passage!

I. The Lord Jesus Christ/ _____ In The Passage!

J. The Personal _____ Of The Passage!

9.

II. EXPLANATION

Howard Hendricks writes: "One time I heard a speaker give a brilliant presentation of a passage of Scripture. On the way out of the auditorium, I overheard two people talking. "Well," one of them was asking, "what did you think of that." The other person shrugged. "Not very much. He didn't do a blessed thing but explain the Bible."

That's the highest compliment I can imagine. After all, the major move, and ultimate objective the preacher, teacher, student, of Scripture is to explain what a text means.!

The fact is, it is impossible to apply the Word of God until you understand it!

The fact is, you can apply the Word better when you really understand what you're studying!

The question is: "Do we really understand the Bible when we read it?"

As we look at Explanation, remember this:

Conversation without _____ will leave you confused!

1. What is meant by Explanation?

Explanation means to decipher the meaning of a text or passage in light of its original application. In other words, we are attempting at this point of Bible Study to understand the-

- _____ of the author.

- _____ of the author.

- _____ of the author.

- _____ ing of the author in writing this text.

This will give us the proper Interpretation of the passage, thus Explaining the passage, and allowing us to properly Apply the passage!

* In Observation we Clue into key words, people, & places. In Explanation we _____ our building!.

10.

2. SOME OF THE PITFALLS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN EXPLANATION ARE:

1. **Mis** _____ the text.

Remember to read God's Word Slowly.

2. **Dis** _____ the text.

3. **Con** _____ the text

Trying to make a verse say something it doesn't!

III. THE USE OF REFERENCE BOOKS

- A. Commentaries
- B. Concordances
- C. Reference Bibles
- D. Study Bibles

* Come to the same conclusions that The **WORD of GOD** come to!
AGREE WITH GOD ABOUT THE MEANING OF HIS WORD!

11.

III. APPLICATION

Application! Application! Application! The use of this word by preachers, teachers, and the like has become more and more commonplace. In fact, most of us have probably heard the word, Application more in the past three to five years than we have in the previous thirty.

This is good, in that it speaks to the positive direction the church is taking toward Christian education and enlightenment. However, I cannot help but wonder how many of us really apply the principle of Application in our own lives.

The renowned psychiatrist Karl Menninger was being interviewed at the famous Menninger clinic in Topeka, Kansas. When the conversation turned to the subject of prison reform, the doctor handed the reporter a book he had written on the subject. The reporter politely promised to read it. "No you won't," Dr. Memminger shot back. "Besides, what would you do about it if you did? Put the book down and go on to something else?"

That's what many of us do with Bible study. We take the book, already written. Promise to read it and then what? I mean, what do we do with God's Word once we've read it? Do we apply it? Do you apply it?

Application is **doing what God says do** Period!
Consider this-

"Application is the most neglected yet the most _____ stage in the Bible Study process."

Dr. Howard G. & William D. Hendricks

* **A LOOK AT SOME SAD SUBSTITUTES FOR APPLICATION:**

1. We often Substitute _____ for application!

"Observation, Explanation, and Interpretation Without Application equals Abortion."

Read Luke 6:46

2. We often Substitute _____ for application!

In other words we only identify the areas of our life where we're already practicing a specific principle instead of identifying other areas which will require real change!

Example:

3. We often Substitute _____^{12.} for repentant application.

Example:

"So I tell a little _____ lie every now and then. Everyone's doing it."

"It's okay to do it _____, after all look at them."

4. We often Substitute an _____ experience for application.

"Sometimes people shout, not because they're 'happy' in the Lord, but because they're in pain in Christ."

Dr. Fred Campbell, Pastor

"It's not how high you shout on Sunday, but how straight you walk when you come down."

Dr. Fred Sampson, Pastor

* **FOUR STEPS IN APPLICATION:**

1. Know Your Text

Remember a text has one explanation/interpretation, but can have many applications.

2. Relate The Text To You

3. Meditate On Your Text & It's Application In Your Life

4. Practice The Principles In That Text Daily!

13.

IV. DETERMINATION

Determination, or perseverance in Bible Study is a must!

Please know and understand that there will be times when you simply don't "feel like studying." There will be times when Satan will tell you, "You know, you could be doing something else right now?" Nevertheless, as you become a student of the Word of God you will develop a need for God's Word.

In fact, you will develop an insatiable appetite for the Bible and its priceless principles. In time you will be able to say with the same fervor and fire of David that God's Word is a "lamp unto your feet, and a light unto your path."

Having said that, let's ask ourselves what does Determination involve?

A. Determination involves _____

*"Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, **I press on** toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."*

-Philippians 3:13, 14 (NAS)

B. Determination involves _____

*"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye **continue in my word**, then are ye my disciples indeed;"*

John 8:31 (KJV)

Quote: "Anything worth anything, is worth working for."

Pastor Fort

David said: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

Psalms 42:1 (KJV)

A Concluding Word

There is no such thing as an Exhaustive Study on Studying the Scriptures. This lesson is designed to provide a handle, a method, and some suggested tools on How To Study The Bible ... With Understanding. I pray that it helps the student in learning more about God and His Love.

Observation, Explanation, Application, and Determination are all important to adequately studying the Scriptures. I have intentionally left out Interpretation, believing that when the other components are present, interpretation will naturally take care of itself.

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE ANSWER SHEET

Page 2

1. Empowered
2. Enlightened
3. Educated

Real Study Involves:

1. IN vestigation
2. EX planation
3. APP lication

Most Reading Includes:

1. Surface
2. Substance
3. Uncertainty

Page 8

1. Curiosity
- A. An alytically
- B. Pa tiently
- C. Me ditatively
- D. Inq uisitvely
- E. Re peatedly

Page 9

- A. Lord
- B. Place
- C. Positive
- D. Negative
- E. Personal
- F. Word(s)
- G. Action
- H. Holy
- I. Himself
- J. Application

Page 10

Explanation

Make-up

Message

Mind

Meaning

Page 11

1. Mis INTERPRETING
2. Dis FIGURING
3. Cong FUSING

Page 12

Important

1. Illustrations
2. Personal Triumphs

Page 13

3. Righteousness

“White”

“Sometimes”

4. External

Page 14

- A. Hard Work
- B. Continuation